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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Letter dated 9 October 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia of 7 October 2006 on developments in Georgia (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 27.

(*Signed*) Irakli **Alasania**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 9 October 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia is authorized to state:

The Russian authorities, in parallel to imposing economic sanctions on Georgia, has begun retaliatory measures against the Georgian citizens and ethnic Georgians, including children, on the territory of Russia.

With the permission and direct instructions of the Russian authorities, universally recognized human rights and freedoms are roughly and widely violated and international and regional acts on human rights, to which the Russian Federation is party, are disregarded.

Even an incomplete list of such actions indicates that a deliberate campaign is taking place given that human rights are violated not by a certain agency, but by a whole state: the Russian Federation.

In various cities of Russia, Georgian citizens, including women and children, are detained and deported from Russia only because of their ethnic background. In this case, there are violated provisions of article 13 (on prohibition of expulsion of foreigners) and article 26 (on prohibition of discrimination) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as article 14 and article 1 of Protocol 12 (prohibition of discrimination), article 4 of Protocol 4 (prohibition of collective expulsion of foreigners) and article 1 of Protocol 7 (protection of procedural safeguards relating to expulsion of foreigners) of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

All teachers and pupils who are citizens of Georgia were sacked from the Russian-administered schools located on the territory of Georgia. There is direct evidence of rough and undisguised violation of international instruments of human rights: article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and article 2 (prohibition of discrimination), article 3 (priority protection of child's interests), articles 28 and 29 (right to education) and article 2 of Protocol 2 (right to education) of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Law-enforcement agencies are raiding commercial enterprises owned by Georgians. A Russian OMON unit, disregarding the principle of ex-territoriality, broke into the hotel Tbilisi attached to the Embassy of Georgia in the Russian Federation. Besides the serious doubts about the lawfulness of such actions, we have strong rationale to state that, in these cases, human rights were also violated, in particular article 1 of Protocol 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, according to which any natural and legal person enjoys the right of property.

The Russian mass media, representatives of the executive and legislative authorities, even high-ranking officials make calls to "clean" Russia's trade enterprises from migrants and to protect the rights of the "native population".

The campaign launched by the authorities of the Russian Federation has already been joined by pseudo-patriotic and neo-Nazi organizations, which welcomed the steps taken by the Kremlin and got actively involved in chauvinistic hysteria and ethnic cleansing, making the process increasingly uncontrollable.

We underline that every fact of violation of human rights, particularly the right of property, will be placed under consideration of the European Court of Human Rights through an action against Russia.

Against the background of such an attitude towards Georgia and the Georgians by the Russian authorities, it is impossible for Russia to act as an impartial mediator in the process of the conflict resolution in Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia assesses repressions against Georgians as another fact of xenophobia, which as a result of policy and propaganda by the Russian authorities, takes increasingly wider hold in the Russian society and acquires dangerous forms. Such action in the eyes of the world community reveals the real vector of policy of this country and its development, which eventually will result in isolation of Russia from the democratic community.

We call on the world democratic community and international organizations to give relevant assessment to the xenophobic actions of the Russian authorities, and to strictly demand from the Russian Federation to put an end to the flagrant and mass violations of universally recognized human rights and freedoms.